

Blind Vision
by
Lewis Kilpatrick
The Lion, Aug. 1927
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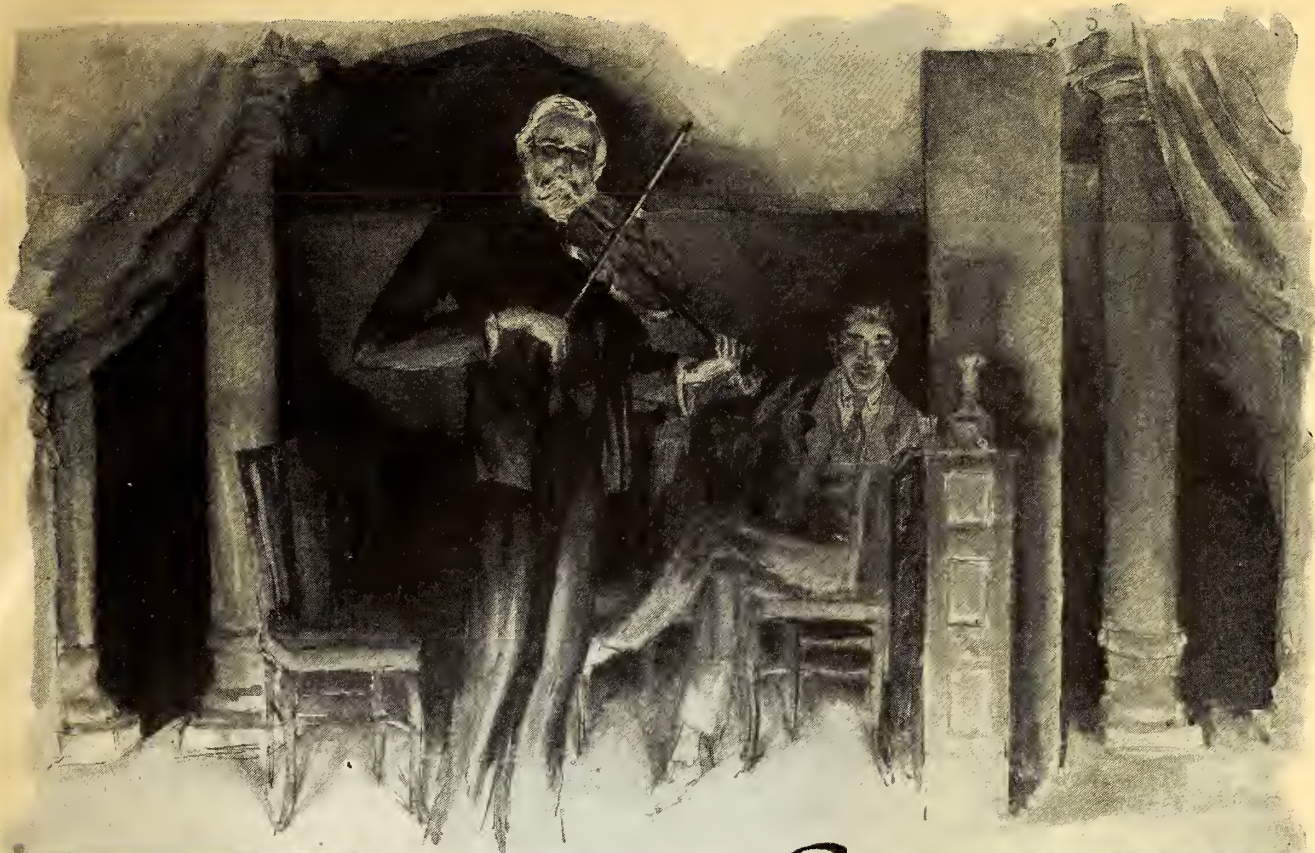
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Blind Vision

By LEWIS KILPATRICK

ILLUSTRATIONS BY RALPH W. REYNOLDS

HORACE GORDON, roaming among the Cumberlands after a summer lecture tour, found old blind Aaron Stafford in overalls and a hickory shirt, barefoot, on his cabin porch at the rocky base of Thunderbolt Mountain. It was early evening; a violin was tucked beneath his gray-bearded chin, and from it Aaron drew stirring notes while he chanted a ballad that once had echoed through Scottish castle halls.

Gordon was wanting just such a native type to appear with him in his winter engagements. So he stopped at the cabin overnight and tactfully presented his proposition. The mountaineer's blindness disabled him for farm work, and his daughter, Minnie, with whom he lived, had lately married and now wished to be rid of him.

"Pap," she said persuasively, "the stranger offers to feed and lodge and clothe ye, and pay ye cash money beside. All you'll have to do is go with him down amongst the big settlements and sing a few tunes threefo' times a week. He promises to have yer eyes treated, too. 'Lows he'll take ye to a doctor in Louisville, who maybe will make ye see ag'in."

"That's more'n Dave and me kin ever do by ye," she added. "Hit'll keep us a-diggin' jest to make a livin', with yo' able only to fiddle and whittle fer yer sheer o' the work. Yo' go 'long with the stranger like he axes afore he changes his mind."

Horace Gordon, a lowland Kentuckian, tall, slender, classical of feature and in his middle thirties, appealed to the old man on a different basis.

"I'm not selfish in wanting you, Mr. Stafford," he declared earnestly. "What I'm trying to do from the lecture platform is correctly to interpret the Southern mountaineers, especially those of Kentucky. The real soul of any people, however, is best expressed in their music. And you and your violin can carry a message from these hills to my audience which they can't get from my words alone."

Aaron pondered the proposition all that night and most of the next day. Probably he realized that he was a burden to Minnie and her husband. Certainly he wanted his sight restored, if such a miracle were possible. But his spoken decision reflected something of the younger man's unselfish spirit.

"I ain't never been outen these hills in my life," he said; "but, stranger, after hearin' yo' talk, I reckon I've a call to go now. If me'n my old fiddle kin help tell the furriners about our country, hit ain't more'n right that we do hit."

"Yas," he concluded, "I'll meet ye in town tomorrow. Dave'll fetch me."

Gordon first took him to Louisville, where an oculist confirmed his observation that Aaron's blindness was

Unique John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

By FRANK H. WILLIAMS

JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER, Jr., quiet, inoffensive, unobtrusive and easily one of the two or three richest men in the entire world, presents an exceedingly interesting study.

His position is unique. Whereas the average big man is chiefly concerned with getting more money, John D., Jr., is chiefly concerned with spending it. Whereas the average big man talks blandly about social welfare and all that sort of stuff and does but little along such lines, young Rockefeller says little but does much.

And, most interesting of all the phases of this unusual man, is the question as to just how far his influence affected his famous father in turning the latter from the incessant pursuit of gold to a serene, happy old age in which benefactions to mankind have replaced sharp practices, throat-cutting competition and general ruthlessness.

The older Rockefeller of today is a different man from the Rockefeller of the nineties when Standard Oil was harvesting a crop of competitors' heads in a decidedly merciless manner. The dime-distributing, genial old philosopher of the present time is entirely distinct from the vulture-like personality revealed in Ida M. Tarbell's famous History of the Standard Oil. And, naturally, the question arises as to just how and when this change came about.

In speculating on this question it becomes pertinent, then, to consider the younger Rockefeller—his environment, his ideals and aspirations and his success in attaining his desires.

Young Rockefeller, born in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1874, is 35 years younger than his father. That is an exceedingly important point to remember. Before young Rockefeller was born the elder Rockefeller was a huge financial success. By the time the young Rockefeller attained his majority, the elder Rockefeller had so many millions that he had to take a month off when he wanted to count them.

And by the time the young Rockefeller was coming into complete maturity and ability—at about the time he was thirty years old—Standard Oil was sitting on top of the world, was considered a national menace and Ida M. Tarbell's flaming history of the corporation was making the fur fly.

In other words, the elder Rockefeller had made his millions, and his fortune was being considered a menace at the time that the younger Rockefeller was just getting to the point where he could back up his desires and his opinion with enough age to make his words effective.

Remember all this as we now consider the environment



John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

and character of the younger Rockefeller.

Young Rockefeller was the only boy in the family of four. As such he was brought up with extreme care. He was sent to church and to Sunday School. He was given only the best books to read. His mind was sent along idealistic lines rather than along materialistic lines. In time he went to Brown University, graduating from that institution in 1897 with the degree of A. B. At college he was a good student, but nothing wonderful.

Following his graduation, young Rockefeller played around with the right sort of people—the sons and daughters of wealthy men—and among these was the daughter of Senator Nelson W. Aldrich, who was one of the outstanding figures of the nineties. A romance developed between this daughter, Amy, and young Rockefeller and at the age of 27 young Rockefeller and Miss Aldrich were married.

At this time we find young Rockefeller trying to learn his father's business, just as the sons of so many other wealthy fathers. We find him, in time, appearing on the directorates of various railroads, oil companies, insurance companies and various other concerns. He was, in other words, being pushed right along by his father in business, evidently with no other thought in mind than that he would continue to do what his father had been doing—namely, to get as much more money as he could in as short a time as possible and keep within the law.

But all wasn't going smoothly in the Rockefeller affairs at this time. During the late nineties the attacks against Standard Oil became more severe. The fact that the older Rockefeller, from his immense stores of wealth, was giving money for charitable and educational purposes didn't quiet the criticism at all. Instead there were certain sordid souls who declared that the Rockefeller gifts were simply sops thrown to the angry mob for the purpose of softening the storms of indignation. And, finally, came the memorable Tarbell History of Standard Oil which threw the methods of the concern into the fierce white light of publicity.

At this present time it is hard to realize just how largely Rockefeller bulked in the public mind in the late nineties and early years of the new century. Some of the old-timers who read this may remember those days and may, also, recall reading a story by O. Henry or some other clever writer of the day outlining a publisher's sudden bit of luck—luck that made him rich overnight. This luck consisted merely in getting Rockefeller, Sr., to write his memoirs and let the publisher print them.

Yes, Rockefeller was completely and constantly in the limelight in those days. And at this time, just when young

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caused by cataracts. An operation would remove the trouble; but, said the doctor, it could not be performed for at least five months. The cataracts were yet unripe.

Aaron showed little disappointment. He suffered no pain and the assurance of some time seeing again was much in itself.

The lecturer met the delicate situation thus created. A private income made him careless of expense. He concealed the sightless eyes with a pair of colored spectacles and employed a young negro, Ben, the son of his black mammy, to act as body-servant to Aaron.

"Naw, I don't need to practice none," the mountaineer protested when Gordon made the suggestion. "Yo' jest pick out what tunes ye want and I'll give 'em. I've been a-practicin' 'em ever since I could hold this fiddle, 'specially after the world begun to git dark around me and I couldn't see to do nothin' else."

Gordon knew that he was risking many complications and embarrassments by including the old man in his lecture program.

"Play and sing just as you would at a gathering of your own neighbors," he insisted. "Imagine yourself back home among the hills, Mr. Stafford, on your cabin porch rather than a public rostrum."

Dressed in a suit of black broadcloth, with a soft-bosomed shirt and black Windsor tie, his white hair and beard carefully groomed, the old mountaineer made a striking figure. He was more than six feet tall; his shoulders were broad, his limbs muscular and straight. The facial animation lost by the eyes was somehow caught and vivified in his rugged brow, aquiline nose and high-bridged cheeks. He stood erect, thoroughly at ease, before his audience, radiating a mellow dignity that commanded attention and respect.

"Folk-songs are the literature of the uneducated," said Horace Gordon in his address. "They are earth poetry, come of the soil and those who live close to the soil."

"Scotch, Irish and English yeomen, leaving the British Isles when the ballad was popular there, brought to Colonial America, and later to the Southern mountains, folk music which has survived nowhere else in the world. The Kentucky grandsons and daughters of those settlers still play and sing these songs, handed down through the generations by oral tradition."

"Also, during the last hundred years, native bards, unlettered but stirred to expression, have chronicled local events in verse and melody. The Kentucky highlander, in his songs, thus unconsciously traces his descent from Old Britain and reflects his present life in folk music of his own."

Aaron Stafford, his wrinkled cheek pressed above his violin, his callous fingers deftly guiding the bow, first rendered "The Turkish Lady."

"Lord Bateman was a noble lord,
He thought himself of high degree;
He could not rest nor be contented
Until he had voyaged across the sea.
He sailed east and he sailed westward,
Until he reached the Turkish shore;
And there he was taken and put in prison,
He lived in hopes of freedom no more—"

In a quavering tenor, with passive features, the mountain minstrel sang the story begotten of the English Crusades. Next came the tragic romance of "Barbara Allen," the fair maid of Scarlet Town; then "The Golden Willow Tree," with its tang of 16th century piracy and adventure.

Horace Gordon listened and watched from an alcove at the rear of the stage. He felt the ancient ballads carry their spell across the footlights; saw the responsive expressions of the audience as they went with the Turkish Lady to Lord Bateman's rescue, of the deathbed of Barbara Allen, and aboard the imperiled Golden Willow Tree when "she sailed from the Lowlands low."

A different atmosphere was created when Aaron chanted of the grim feud in "Rowan County Troubles." "Wreck on the F. F. V." extolled a modern hero, "The Ground Hog Hunt" pictured the mountaineer at the chase, and in "Old Smoky" a jilted lass philosophized over her broken heart. These ballads exhaled the very breath of the Kentucky hills, expressing the hurts and hopes of their stalwart, primitive people.

"Don't ye reckon thar'll be church folks in the crowd who'll disgust fast music?" Aaron objected when Gordon included three jig airs in his repertoire. "Ye know, Horace, when a body's religious, hit's a sin to even listen at sech tunes. I don't want to offend nobody."

"You won't offend," the young man assured him. "We need some mountain jazz to picture our hillfolk at play, show the happier side of their lives."

And when Aaron rollicked through "Sourwood Mountain," "Martha Campbell" and "Leather Breeches," characteristically patting one foot on the floor, his audience reacted with appreciative smiles, and other feet kept muffled time to the measures.

"Them people really seemed to like my playin'," he said, frankly pleased, after the performance. "I couldn't see how they was taking hit, o' course, but I felt 'em peerin' hard at me and heerd a lot o' clappin'."

He chuckled with conscious vanity. "Wal, if ye'll pardon me fer sayin' hit, Horace, thar's heap worse music than what I make. Time was when this Stafford was accounted the beatin'est fiddler in his part o' Kentucky. Yas, sir! I've carried off more prizes at the contests than arry other feller in Crag County. Nobody else had any

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Home and Peace

Picnic Day in Hay Center

(From the Hay Center Courier-Journal)

By HARRY B. PASCHALL

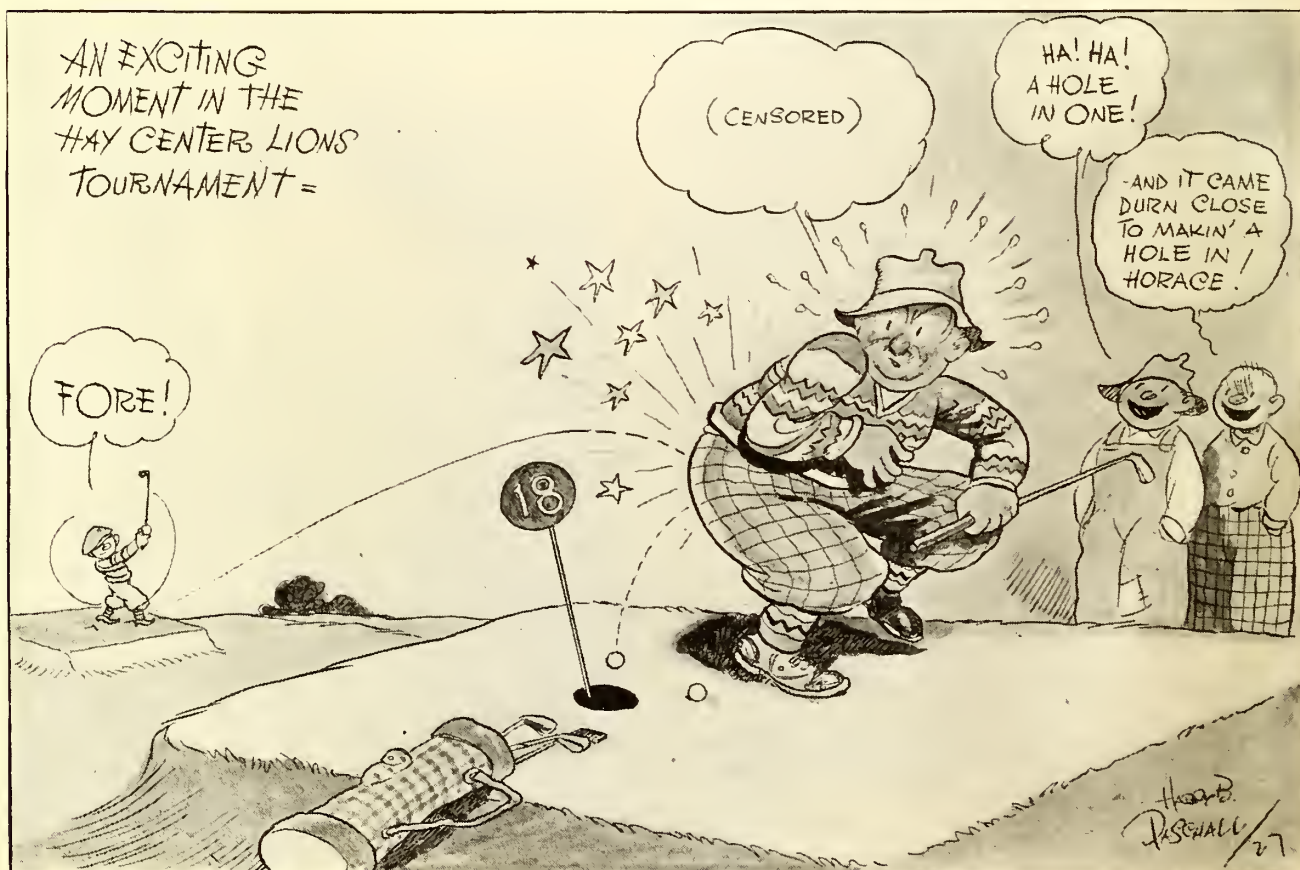
LAST Wednesday was a Gala Day in Hay Center; a day long to be remembered by the rank and file of our citizenry (especially the "rank"), for Wednesday was the occasion of the annual Lions' picnic, and it proved to be, as expected by Ye Editor, a day replete with thrills and unfettered rejoicing.

The picnic was held in the spacious and beautiful grounds of the Sleepy Hollow Country Club, three miles south of town on the Alum Crick Road, just below Jeff Davis' Fruit Farm. The Sleepy Hollow Club boasts of one of the most unique golf courses in this section of the country. It is an eighteen-hole course, but there are only three holes, so in order to play the full round, the customers play back and forth six times over the three holes. It is rather convenient, because you never have to walk outside of a ten-acre field, but it is hard

on the caddies because they have to run ahead and put up new pins at each hole before it is played, and sometimes they get the wrong numbers on the holes and the members find they are playing No. 7, when they just got through shooting No. 16.

Another peculiarity of the Sleepy Hollow course is the "rough." Not that it is any rougher than most roughs, but in order to keep down expenses the club rents the ground to Eddie O'Neill, whose potato patch adjoins the club, and Eddie usually manages to raise a bumper crop of wheat and oats and divots on this section of the course. Up to this year the members had no kick coming, because wheat and oats are not so bad to swing a club in, but last spring Eddie put out a crop of corn, and since it got shoulder high it's a tough place to get lost in.

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Blind Vision

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show a-tall when I drew my bow. "Yo' jest let me git my eyes back," he predicted, "and I'll do even better'n I done tonight. We'll give these furriners some shore 'nough music then!"

Gordon wondered if the old man had any conception of his present surroundings and the people among whom he blindly moved. Never before had he been away from his native hills; and, now that he was away, he could not discern the radical difference.

"Air the mountings 'round here as high as ourn?" Aaron inquired as their train passed through central Ohio. And when his companion replied that the land in every direction was low and flat, the old man shook his head, puzzled.

"I shouldn't like to live in these parts," he finally muttered. "Withouten a few ridges and knobs a-hug-gin' me about, I 'low I'd be almighty loose-feelin' and lonely."

They walked leisurely along a city business street in the November dusk, Aaron using a cane with his right hand, his left in Gordon's arm.

"Whar air all these folks a-hurry-in' to?" he asked. "Sounds to me thar's several hundred of 'em, a-goin' like they was bein' chased by a b'ar."

"There are thousands of them, really," Gordon answered, guiding him through the throngs. "They've finished their work and are going to supper—dinner, they call it."

"Hump!" the mountaineer shrugged. "They can't 'a' worked very hard today, else their feet 'ud be too sore to tromp so fast."

But he always tried to understand. "Maybe, tho, they've got women and young 'uns at home that they're a-hankerin' to see. I know how that is." He smiled. "When my Sarah had her fust baby, I'd quit hoein' a hour afore sun-down and run ever' step o' the way back to them."

Another time, while seated at his hotel-room window, a loud bang! sounded above the traffic's roar in the street below. Aaron quickly slid from his chair and crouched tensely behind the sill.

"That's only an automobile blow-out," explained Gordon, knowing what he thought. "There isn't any danger, sir."

The mountaineer rose and reseated himself, but was hardly convinced.

"Hit shot mighty like a pistol to me," he said. "I 'lowed some feller had met his enemy and they'd got into hit. Ben, supposen yo' go down and I'arn fer sartin if nobody was hurt."

The young negro was Aaron's constant companion. A typical fondness developed between the two. Ben always slept on a cot in his room, attended to his clothes, and proudly dressed him for his platform appearances. He took the old man for walks and rides, ordered his meals, standing respectfully behind his chair at table, and ran such errands as his simple wants required.

"Mr. Horace," the darky once re-

marked, "he'd been a gentleman same as you if he'd had de chance. He ain't ob no po' white stock. Why, sah, when you all goes out togedder, him in his black clothes and black slouch hat, holdin' hisself so straight, people jes' naturally stop on de street and stare. He—he's 'stinguished, dat's what Mr. Aaron is. Even de bell-hops and portahs, knowin' he can't see, touch der caps to him."

Horace Gordon nodded. "Your're right, Ben," he said. "And what I'm trying to tell the rest of the country is that there are thousands of folk in the Kentucky Mountains of just such stock; as good blood as any in America."

Gordon's winter tour, directed by a lecture bureau, took the trio through the Central, Northern and New England states. He was always busy and in social demand at their various stops; and, shielding Aaron from the public as he had to, the old man was left much alone with Ben.

The negro's ingenuity fashioned a checker board, with one set of the checkers squared, at which he and Aaron could play. He also taught his protegee the mysteries of dice, whose indented spots could be counted with the finger-tips, using matches for pawns. Then, too, they enjoyed swapping yarns with each other. Ben told wondrous tales of the Blue Grass race tracks, where he had worked as stable boy and jockey, of grand balls and fashionable house-parties, attended as valet to a Gordon, and of the frolics of his own happy people. Aaron in turn related his troubles with the moonshiners of his neighborhood, the feud wars and promiscuous shootings he had witnessed, sketching battles, deaths and "funeral meetin's" with a realism which made the negro spend many a sleepless night.

Often, however, the mountaineer preferred to be alone, playing his violin or, seated at his hotel window with the sash raised, listening to the myriad sounds that beat up from the busy streets below. His hearing and sense of smell had developed an acuteness which frequently astonished his companions.

Once, after the program in a small New York city, Gordon asked:

"Uncle Aaron, why did you include 'Lovesick' in your group of mountain songs tonight? It got across big all right, but I wasn't expecting it."

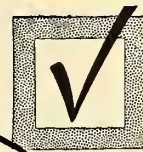
The old man laughed softly.

"I heerd a boy out in the crowd whisper, 'Gladys, ye're lookin' pow'ful sweet tonight.' And, Horace, I jest 'lowed that air love-ballet would pleasure them, and I sung hit."

Several evenings later, as they were driving back to their hotel in a taxi, he remarked:

"Some woman thar tonight had on a quare sort o' scent. I never smelt hit afore, except that time we was in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Reckon I'll git a bottle o' somethin' like hit to take home to Minnie when I go."

A plaintive melancholy tinged his tone: "Horace, I 'low thar'll be a bornin' night Thunderbolt afore very



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long now. Wonder if I'll ever be able to see that grandbaby?"

"Of course you will, Uncle Aaron." Gordon laid a reassuring hand over his; he had come to have a real affection for the old man. "A few weeks more," he said, "and we'll turn southward. We close near Louisville, in March, and then Dr. Baird can get busy on those cataracts."

He added: "You'll have time after the operation to run back to Crag County for a bit before we start out again. You know, you've agreed to go on Chautauqua with me next summer. You've made such a hit that now you're the biggest part of the program."

Aaron moved closer on the cab seat to the young man and pressed his free hand over the fingers that clasped his. By the street lights Gordon saw a strained expression on the wrinkled face, a reaching out of the other senses after something which the blinded eyes denied him.

"Horace, I like yer turn—I love ye," came huskily from the bearded lips. "I ain't never seen yer countenance, but I've looked fer and deep behind hit. Ye've been jest like a son to me, ye have, al'ays gentle and soft-spoken and kindly. I'm glad, pow'ful glad, that I've come up to what ye wanted of me. Yas, and I'll go with ye wherever yo' say, Horace, anywhar. I love ye."

Horace Gordon took unselfish pleasure in the fact that Aaron's part of the program sometimes really did receive more comment than his own. The mountaineer's very personality and poise confirmed the lecturer's tribute to the Southern highlander.

"You're the text, he's the illustration of your address, Mr. Gordon," declared one local manager. "Or, to change the metaphor, you're the voice and he's the throbbing heart of the Kentucky hills."

Aaron's share of the applause always was the loudest and most prolonged, an appreciation alike of his music and himself. Said a New England press review:

"The very simplicity of the Kentucky Mountain ballads makes for vividness. Their rugged phraseology, accentuated by their homely melodies, conveys a clearer and deeper impression than could more elaborate and complex compositions.

"Even a lay listener would not call Aaron Stafford a genius, but a master musician cannot hear his repertoire without being stirred. He, with his violin, is an eloquent interpreter of a people much maligned and little understood."

Supported by an iron physique, acquired by a primitive, active life, the old man for all his sixty years was less wearied than Gordon by their tour. At first he missed his feather-

tick, on which he was used to sleeping winter and summer; his palate hungered for home-cured pork and Southern cornbread, and for a while he actually shrank from contact with the glazed surface of a modern bathtub. But gradually, and with few complaints, he had adjusted himself to the new life. It was a world only of touch and sound and odor to him, through which his faith in Gordon and the negro Ben allowed him to be led.

"I wonder how he'll react when he sees his audiences," Gordon said to Dr. Baird, when they returned to Louisville that March. "He plays by ear, doesn't know one printed musical note from another; so his blindness hasn't been a handicap in that respect. But he has only the vaguest idea of his present environment. Restored sight to him will mean being born again."

"Why, he'll be like a child in fairyland," predicted the oculist, confidently. "A bit confused at first, of course, but interested and thrilled by everything he sees. I'm looking forward to observing him."

The old man weathered the operation and after-treatment like a Spartan. The long days of hospital confinement and bandaged eyes were no hardship to him. He already had learned the difficult lesson of patience. When Dr. Baird promised that within a week he would remove the last bandages and Aaron would see again, the old man smiled happily and made a request.

"I want to sot eyes on Horace fust thing," he said. "Then I want to see if that Ben is black as he 'lows he is. Ax him to fetch his dice along, and we'll celebrate with a leetle game."

When Aaron recovered sufficiently, but with his eyes still protected by dark glasses, Gordon and Dr. Baird took him for drives through the city. To the surprise of his companions, he showed little wonder at what he saw and asked few questions. Gordon, seated beside him, pointed out and explained objects and scenes of particular interest, watching for an appropriate reaction. But the mountaineer only looked and listened silently, a dazed, dumb expression on his face.

"Folks dress mighty quare around here," he commented once, scornfully. "'Pears to me they're tryin' to show-off, wearin' sech fine clothes."

"Horace, ye say this city's purty much like all the others we've been in? People look and act the same, and the houses and streets air the same, too.

"Thar's so much racket hit makes me deaf and dizzy. Reckon I'll shet my eyes fer a spell. Hit ain't so bad when I can't see what all's a-causin' the noise."

Strangely, Aaron did not ask for his violin during the weeks of his convalescence. His venerable good humor and buoyancy, which so often enlivened the days of his darkness, gradually left him. His appetite failed and he slept badly of nights. Even

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the fickle dice and a new checker-board ceased to interest him. He talked little, and then usually about the hills and the people there. He grew listless, despondent, and twice his nurse found him with tears trickling down his wrinkled cheeks.

"Uncle Aaron," said Gordon, who visited him daily, "we have two special invitations. The Southern Society of Indianapolis wants us for a return engagement, and the local Educational Association guarantees to pack Macauley's Theater if we'll appear here. Dr. Baird says you're in platform shape again and a little work will do you good. What do you think?"

The old minstrel brightened. "O' course I'll go, Horace," he exclaimed. "I'm sort-adauncy, maybe, but I kin still fiddle and sing. I got my eyes back now!"

Yet in Indianapolis Aaron Stafford made his first failure. He did not come to the rostrum at his cue in Gordon's introduction, and the lecturer had to go and escort him in. He fumbled his violin, once dropped the bow in the midst of a selection, and seemed more conscious of his audience than his music. He played and sang mechanically, without feeling or expression, his shoulders stooped, his voice breaking with every other verse, obviously confused and distressed.

Horace Gordon did not reprove or question him afterward, however, and the old man said nothing in apology.

But when he appeared at the Louisville theater, a few nights later, he did even worse. He omitted whole stanzas of the English ballads, making them meaningless, and sang "Rowan County Troubles" to the jig tune "Martha Campbell." Once he stopped short, gazed stupidly out over the crowded house, and rubbed the back of his right hand across his eyes, trembling.

The applause was fitful, forced. Finally Gordon, out of sheer mercy, interrupted the program, led him from the stage, and returning, explained that Mr. Stafford had lately been ill and was not yet recovered.

He really excused the old man on those grounds, reproaching himself for inducing him to return to the platform so soon.

But, the next day, Aaron confronted him with the truth. They were in the sitting room of Gordon's apartment, standing at a window opened to the fresh spring air.

"Horace," the old man spoke slowly, with an effort, "when I started out with ye last fall, yo' tole me to sing and play jest like I was still at home amongst my own people.

"I knowed I wasn't, o' course," he continued; "knowed I was in a strangle land, a-consortin' with strangers. But hit was easy fer me to fancy the hills piled up all about me, with Thunderbolt close by retchin' toward the clouds, the cricks a-chucklin' down the hollers and the wind a-talkin' through the pines. I'd never seen no

other sort o' country, recollect, and I'd gone blind lookin' on jest sech sights. I'd learned the ole tunes thar, played and sung 'em al'ays amongst the hills—and, whilst the rest o' me was in a furrin land, that's whar my eyes still were."

Aaron paused, braced a hand against the window sash, and gazed out and up beyond the roof tops to the sun-washed sky. He breathed deeply, as if he would draw some of the clean azure into himself—the sky that arched alike over lowlands and mountains.

"Ever'thing's changed now, Horace," he resumed after a moment. "I kin see and the mountings air gone from afore my eyes. I know how turrable strange all this is; the people with their quare dress and ways, the level country, the big houses jammed end to end fer miles, the train-cyars and autymobiles and sech —"

"But you'll get used to it," Gordon interrupted. "It won't be strange to you after a while."

The old man shook his head. "Mounting music ain't natural in these parts, Horace. I can't feel natural a-playin' hit. Me'n' my fiddle we come from the hills and we don't be-long nowhar's else." His voice quavered: "We air furriners ourselves down here and the music has clean gone out o' us!"

Gordon, unable to trust his own voice for a minute, put his arm about Aaron's shoulders, bowed and trembling. He knew what the confession had cost him; felt with him the bitter sting of failure and humiliation.

He forced an encouraging laugh.

"You're homesick, Uncle Aaron, that's it," he exclaimed. "I don't blame you for striking after the hard winter you've put in. But a couple of weeks back home will set you to rights again. I'll start you off tomorrow."

The bowed shoulders lifted and the old man smiled faintly.

"Maybe," he said, "maybe. I'm beholden to ye fer a lot, Horace; more, heap more, than I kin ever pay. But—but—wal, maybe I will be all right after I've been home fer a spell. I promised to keep on with ye this summer, and—yas—I will."

Gordon told Aaron that he would stop by for him on his way South to begin their Chautauqua circuit.

A fortnight later, therefore, going as far into Crag County as the railroad could carry him, he hired a horse at the flag station and started over the remaining fourteen rutted miles to Thunderbolt Mountain.

He halted frequently to verify directions, and once he inquired about the old man.

"He's jest as pert as ye please," declared his informer. "Tromped plumb from the railroad by himself when he come home, 'thout even usin' a cane. He's a-plowin' and a-plantin' to beat sin, happier'n I've seen him in many a long year. Thar's a grand-baby at his house now, too. Minnie and Dave named hit Aaron, and that

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Stafford he's prouder then if he'd had hit hisself."

It was after sundown when Gordon reached Thunderbolt. He stopped his horse behind a screen of rhododendron, where the trail dipped sharply around its last bend to the valley.

In the valley, just beneath him, was the cabin, log-walled, windowless, its clapboard roof flecked with moss and mould. A spiral of gray smoke twisted upward from its rock chimney, linking it with the blue mists shrouding the mountainside.

On the porch, where Gordon had first seen him, was the old minstrel. His broadcloth was laid aside for the overalls and hickory shirt, and his feet were bare. Dave lounged in the cabin doorway behind him, listening, and nearby sat Minnie with the baby in her arms. The violin was pressed beneath Aaron's chin, the bow flitted surely across its strings, and from the bearded lips, clear and strong, rang the melancholy tale of "Barbara Allen."

Horace Gordon looked upon the scene and smiled, thoughtful, convinced.

"He was right," he murmured. "Here is where he belongs, among the hills that hold all he really wants and loves. It would be brutal to take him away again. His bow would lose its message, his soul its vision, in concert halls and tents now. Seeing, he couldn't see; knowing, he couldn't feel. Yes, I'll leave him here — at home."

He looked and smiled again, his eyes moistening. Then, with the ancient ballad echoing through the dusk behind him, he turned his horse and rode away.

A man who is deaf to other sounds can nearly always hear the rustle of a petticoat.

John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

(Continued from page 9)

Rockefeller should, by all the rules of the game, have been forging right ahead in business and getting ready to step into his father's shoes, reports were forthcoming in the public press to the effect that as a business man young Rockefeller was a distinct dud.

Young Rockefeller, it appeared, had no flare for business. In fact it was reported that he had, instead, a distinct faculty for making mistakes and bawling up things generally. It was declared that he seemed unable to originate progressive business policies. He wasn't shrewd at taking advantage of opportunities. And so on and so forth and the word went around in some sections of the public that here was the typical case of a rich man's son again—the son being a miserable failure while the father was a huge success.

Also there were some reports current at the time that the elder Rockefeller wasn't at all pleased with the son. It was rumored that instead of being pleased the elder Rockefeller was distinctly disgusted with young John and was actually dismayed to find that his son couldn't carry on the business in the way his dad wished him to do. Whether or not there was anything much in these reports or whether they were simply rumors and nothing more, the fact remains that young Rockefeller was anything but a whirlwind success in business.

Things drifted along this way for a time and then the elder Rockefeller's donations for education and charity began to assume a new form. The Institute for Medical Research was founded by the elder Rockefeller in 1901. The general Education Board was founded in 1903 and the Rockefeller Foundation, with its \$100,000,000 capital donated by Rockefeller,

came into being. And all this, mind you, happened just at the time when young Rockefeller was reaching the age when he would, naturally, just begin to assert himself and when his counsels would be most likely to have weight with his father.

Almost it seems as though the two Rockefellers had a heart-to-heart talk about the time that the younger Rockefeller got married—when he was twenty-seven years old—or a few years later. And it almost seems as though the younger Rockefeller may have said something like this to his dad:

"Father, I don't like business. I've been brought up differently. I like church and Sunday school work. I'm interested in sociological matters and things of that sort. Can't we come to some sort of an arrangement whereby I can get out of these things that do not interest me and into things that do interest me?"

"Why must I busy myself adding more hundreds of millions to the hundreds of millions you already have? Isn't it about time for you to quit—to say 'I have enough?' I know that with what I have a right to expect from you I have plenty and will always have plenty and I can't see any real reason for adding to it.

"Why not let me handle the spending of your money, rather than making me try to amass more wealth. That's the sort of thing I'm interested in—education, handling sociological problems and things of that sort."

Perhaps this plea of the younger Rockefeller didn't make a very great impression on the older Rockefeller. But, perhaps, the younger Rockefeller kept up the same line of talk at future interviews and, perhaps, he backed up his arguments by refusing to get any deeper in business. And, of course, if this is the case all this must, inevitably, have made a deep impression on the older Rockefeller who, all through his career, has shown that he has had an open mind on almost all subjects.

Then, finally, came the shock to the older Rockefeller of the government suit against Standard Oil and the infliction by Judge K. M. Landis of the memorable \$29,000,000 fine against that corporation.

All the evidence is to the effect that this suit and the bitter attack of the government and the slashing comments of the press and the appalling large fine, made a terrific impression on the older Rockefeller. It is declared that he became almost obsessed with a fear that a jail sentence might be inflicted on him and it is further declared that, immediately after that suit, he severed all active connection with Standard Oil and never again entered his old office at 26 Broadway. Whether this latter statement is an actual fact or not, is unimportant. The important fact is that Rockefeller took the blow of the government suit straight between the eyes and it nearly floored him.

Apparently old John D. had never

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